

**February 12, 2004**  
**Citizen Budget Forum**  
**Community Design Studio**

**City Planning & Code Enforcement Services**

*Comments on Highest Priority Programs*

- Citizen & Neighborhood Resources (CNR) Administration - The original part of downtown & areas to the south end have paid for everything in the whole town
- Citizen & Neighborhood Administration - These are the people we come to for assistance on the rules we play by, also, the people who should be able to tell us who to contact to address our questions & concerns
- Citizen & Neighborhood Administration – Without you are – lost.
- Citizen & Neighborhood Administration – Original Downtown Homes – Support.
- Code Enforcement - Code enforcement is important to send a strong message as to the impact we each have in responsibility to one another
- Code Enforcement – 15-20 years area has gone down hill, losing good citizens as a result.
- Code Enforcement - Not adequate code inspectors (#)
- Code Enforcement - Numerous rentals need better enforcement. Absentee owners don't care.
- Code Enforcement – Ordinance is out of date – last updated? Benchmark other cities. Parking codes too lax.
- Code Enforcement - Lack of enforcers. Watching area deteriorate over last 15+ years.
- Code Enforcement - Keep neighborhoods up to par and not letting them run down and keeping them safe
- Code Enforcement - Our codes should be as good as others in the area to protect the value of our houses
- Code Enforcement - Deterioration of older areas will increase with the absentee owners & property being rentals
- Code Enforcement - The codes need to be changed again. Parking-so we need more code enforcement inspectors. Need one person on Saturdays.
- Code Enforcement - Would like to have code enforcement inspectors on the weekend.
- Code Enforcement - We need more code enforcement! One person who has the area from Thomas to McKellips and the alleys is ludicrous! With the amount of rentals that we are acquiring its impossible for one person to do it! We in our neighborhoods help as much as possible! Need weekend and night coverage too.
- Customer Service & Communications - We need more police & return to the teams patrolling the areas.
- Customer Service & Communications – Encourage block watch
- Downtown Group/Preservation/Environmental Planning/Citizen & Neighborhood Resources Admin./Customer Service & Communications – Heritage Historic References unique quality for citizens and tourists, preserve character of Scottsdale, attract creative class, can't bring back Sonoran Desert preserve as much as we can, historic registry.
- Downtown Group - We need to preserve and enhance our historic character to our downtown because it is our heritage
- Downtown Group - Help revitalize livable, social, economic base, attract "creative class", compete with other cosmopolitan cities
- Downtown Group - The preservation of downtown is important
- Downtown Group - Needed focus on rebuild of downtown.
- Downtown Group - Need more benches-not fancy.
- Downtown Group - After 25 years the Scottsdale Symphony could not use the Center of the Arts. All over the county the Symphonies are having money problems. They are part of the Arts and should be given.
- Downtown Group - Wasted money on huge bus trolleys.

- Downtown Group - Concerns about the price of downtown living getting too high that will keep families/middle class away from downtown.
- Economic Development – Increase tax revenue without getting it directly from the homeowner.
- Economic Development - Jobs, jobs, jobs! Increase tax base. Attract talented pool of workers
- Housing Rehabilitation & ADA - Aging population some need assistance to maintain properties.
- Housing Rehabilitation & ADA - Handicap accessibility is important within the City, especially at park-and-rides and bus stops.
- Hospitality Development - Promote Scottsdale. CVB is doing a great job. Tourism is essential to Scottsdale's well-being.
- Plan Review & Permit Services - Greater focus on single-family home improvements & staff assistance.
- Preservation - Preservation is important to our future generation
- Preservation - Retain natural beauty, topography, marketing tool, increase property value!
- Preservation - Too late to save the desert, but I am concerned about preserving historic buildings and areas
- Preservation - Preserving the historical neighborhoods is a great attraction and a big plus to the city
- Preservation – Expensive, ongoing, imperative.
- Preservation – Preserve as much land as possible.
- Preservation – Invaluable asset.
- Revitalization - New businesses redoing McDowell corridor would help the above two (code enforcement and housing rehabilitation)
- Revitalization - Up to date and that makes and attracts people who want to live in the area instead of moving out.
- Revitalization – South of Thomas needs improvement – new business.

#### *Comments on Lowest Priority Programs.*

- CNR Information Resources - Never knew it existed
- Current Planning – Combine with others. Too many staff at meetings (day or night).
- Economic Development - Redundant to revitalization
- Economic Vitality Administration - Maybe tighten and cut back.
- Existing Business Services – Redundant - Citizen service centers can address.
- Hospitality Development - Let the Chamber of Commerce pick up the slack here
- Hospitality Development – Well-known city.
- Hospitality Development – Let Chamber take back.
- Housing Rehabilitation & ADA - Redundant to neighborhood services
- Inspection & Land Survey Services - Why can't this be farmed out in another creative way through contractors or state agencies for some of the very large projects?
- Planning & Development Services - Do you really need that many people, 127?
- Preservation - Too much money and maybe too late
- Preservation - Preserve dollars - No benefit to me. Let private groups work with housing preservation.

### **Leisure, Cultural & Human Services**

#### *Comments on Highest Priority Programs.*

- Adult Sports & Fitness Programs – I go to Elder's Fitness Program.
- Aquatics – Very interested in.
- Arts & Cultural Services - Essential to the fabric of Scottsdale's identity.
- Arts & Cultural Services - Renovating former IMAX theatre good idea. Create a theatre district in downtown Scottsdale like in other U.S. cities. Have multiple small theatres instead of just one central theatre in town.
- Arts & Cultural Services - Requesting 80 thousand dollars of matching funds for a citizen-driven effort to raise the funds necessary to put in place a public art sculpture of Winfield Scott and his wife Helen.
- Parks, Rec. & Fac. – Planning & Admin – I am very interested in parks and recreation.

- WestWorld / Professional baseball - Important to Scottsdale due to sales tax and bed tax dollars they generate.
- Senior Services - There have been several recent reports of suicides by the elderly in Scottsdale. This issue needs to be addressed.
- Youth Activities - Important for kids in high school to keep them active and "off the streets".

#### *Comments on Lowest Priority Programs.*

- Aquatics - Can be handled by the private sector. Aquatics not an essential program since so many Scottsdale residents have swimming pools.
- Grounds Maintenance - Water (drought) concerns for the City. Continued efforts need to be made to conserve water in the City. Waste of water in City parks, sprinklers broken or watering pavement/sidewalks, waste of water on soccer field.
- Parks and Recreation - The city should not charge a fee for Little League fields.
- Senior Services - There is a low return on investment from providing senior services

### **Public Safety Services**

#### *Comments on Highest Priority Programs*

- Burglary & Theft Investigations - Increase in neighborhood crime in my area
- Burglary & Theft Investigations – Need to prevent and catch.
- Crime Prevention – Anticipation
- Crime Prevention – Crime will be accelerating rapidly as illegals flood the country and jobs for others will turn good people into bad to exist.
- General Fire Protection - The city should not fund the past service retirement costs for the Rural Metro firefighters hired by the city in July 2005.
- General Fire Protection - The city should move to hire key executives/management personnel for the Fire transition as soon as possible in FY 2004/05.
- General Fire Protection – Transition to Municipal Fire Department
- Narcotics Undercover Investigations - Meth Labs/drug rings/cut down violence and increase neighborhood safety
- Narcotics Undercover Investigations - Increase in drug related problems
- Patrol Services – Be available /code enforcement
- Patrol Services - Citizen protection & safety
- Patrol Services - Put two officers per car
- Patrol Services - First response
- Patrol Services - Lack of community policing has caused deterioration in the heavier populated areas of the south
- Patrol Services - More neighborhood officers
- Patrol Services - Primary role of dept/deterrent/ability to respond
- Photo Enforcement - Need more on major intersections
- Photo enforcement – Because its not enough
- Planning, Research & Accreditation – Safety (especially new construction)
- Recruiting & Personnel - Without good personnel nothing else matters
- Sex Crimes Investigations - Remove most dangerous criminals
- Technology – Safety - Preventative activities
- Traffic Enforcement - Speeders-raise revenue-prevent accidents
- Traffic Enforcement – Speed kills
- Training - To make the whole dept work – crime prevention by knowledge & training.
- Training - Crime prevention by knowledge & training
- Violent Crimes Investigations - Citizen protection & safety
- Violent Crimes Investigations - After the fact
- Violent Crimes Investigations - Most victimized individuals

*Comments on Lowest Priority Programs*

- Detention – Can we take to county?
- Event Traffic Control - Let special events & bars pay costs
- Event Traffic Control - Up to event
- False Alarm Reduction Program – Charge fees for violations
- False Alarm Reduction Program – Fines too low
- Fire Support – Redundant / firefighters better qualified
- Fire Support - City employees not properly trained and municipal fire dept will not need.
- Mounted Patrol - Only if money is short
- Mounted Patrol - Let special events & bars pay costs
- Photo Enforcement – Cameras have no discretion
- Photo Enforcement - Snap judgments
- Photo Enforcement - Philosophically wrong
- Planning, Research & Accreditation - Possibility to combine with office of Chief? Don't eliminate – reduce.
- School Resource Services – Why?
- Telephone Reporting Services - Should be upgraded

**In difficult economic times how would you prefer the City respond?**

- A. - Better police prevention means less investigation. Implies less cost as a result.
- A. - We must live within our means. To increase taxes when revenues (incomes) are falling will cause a greater fall in economy-simple supply and demand of economics. Review departmental people for possible savings to keep services up.
- A. - There are many worthless programs funded by city. As recommended by Citizen Budget Committee many could be reduced or eliminated. We cannot keep adding new taxes without creating a new subclass of people unable to exist and live in Scottsdale. Could add development fees. Review cost of benefits for staff to see if they are not in excess of corporate wages. They should not be guaranteed lifetime job security. If they can't hack the job bye-bye. Diversity goals shouldn't enter into picture.
- B. - We are growing and a "grown city." Our resources have not kept up with our population and it is imperative we seek changes in county property tax assessments to help fund our needs.
- B. - Reducing the budget and related services has backlashes against the citizens, therefore we need to maintain our budget and find other revenues.
- B. - I think tax is not an evil word. We enjoy an incredible quality of life – we need to be ready to pay for it.
- B. - Impact fees relative to all impacts and how it effects the rest of the tax payers should fall on mostly on those create the influx of our populations.
- B. - Impact fees. Make absentee homeowner pay a fee so that they will keep an eye on their property.
- C. - Review all departments and reduce staff accordingly - reduce employee benefits especially in fully funded health insurance program. Review all salaried position. Management structure looks like an upside-down pyramid.
- C. - Parks department does not have efficient staffing. Revenue from fines for violations are way to lower costs to dept/city. For example, code violations, library fines, speeding/traffic violations, charge park usage fees and signs violations, for example, political signs, charge fees for garage sales (require permits), special events.
- C. - Service needs, to some extent, must track inflation, population growth and social change.
- C. - Reductions - eliminate arts funding, reduce community services that benefit small segments (seniors, education, equestrian facilities).
- C. - City is just a business. A good business practice is increase revenue and cut cost.
- C. - Some services cannot be fixed and costs escalate e.g. utilities and maintenance, payroll auxiliaries. Programs need to be evaluated because some gain or lose in value and possible some could be eliminated.

- C. - Make more judicious decisions regarding incentives to attract new business, e.g. Los Arcos.
- C. - The least would be eliminating services such as code enforcers, police and fire. More money could be generated from impact fees and using employees more effectively.
- C. - The growth we have experienced in Scottsdale has been paid for basically by the old Scottsdale! We should have put impact fees in with the growth! Sprawl is costly and all the services have gone up and our schools down in our area are in dire straits!! Our services also are pretty minimal, lack of code enforcement, not enough police coverage and our water bills are probably one of the highest compared to other cities!
- C. - Give incentives to staff and employees to cut cost in boom and bust times. Remove the "spent the budget or we'll lost it" mentality. We should always seek to do more with less.
- C. - Budget should be lean and mean-like our household budgets are in time of crises-while working on developing relationships with long term industry. WalMart isn't going to do it!

### **Where do you think the money should come from?**

- Sales / User / Service - I worry about the elderly on fixed incomes who can sustain their livelihoods but can't pay for an increase of a property tax. To own property is a fundamental right that should not be tampered with by overtaxing.
- Sales / User - Sales taxes also come from out of town people (Phoenix, etc) visitors. A small increase in user fees.
- Sales/Property/User/Service - Where a segment of the population is especially singled out for a benefit, there should be additional user fees and service charges. Where benefits are more general, use either sales and/or property taxes.
- Sales/Property/User/Service - Scottsdale is attracting service companies-DHL, Vanguard. There are many professional service companies that have a "free ride" in terms of taxing their products.
- Property / Service - Pay for services in relation to benefit. If your location is enhanced by special services or surroundings your benefit should equal cost. We have many unique services and offering in Scottsdale which increase our property value and we should pay for those benefits.
- Property / User - Most progressive tax to most regressive tax – tax the highest end earners.
- User / Service - Those who utilize services should pay the costs without receiving subsidies from other taxpayers.
- User / Service - Increase all fees for planning services, all services that require labor intense responses. Elevate all fees for speeding, dangerous driving such as red light and stop sign violators.
- User / Service - Users should pay. This includes land for the park up north.
- User Fees - I would say service fees but I'm not happy with the pool use fee increasing to a double price from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per visit.
- Service - User fees could be used but not to the extent that it affects children and others in a lower economic status from being able to use facilities. That only creates another problem.
- Other - Increase sin tax (alcohol, cigarettes); greater economic development efforts.
- Other – Impact fees.
- Other - Maybe we should not be so generous to the cultural council and the amount of money we spend on WestWorld? Let them pay or setup a system since the hotels say they bring in money let the hotels and WestWorld pay for it themselves!
- Other – Increase impact user fee!

### **Cost Reduction Ideas**

- Cut out all tax incentive programs for bringing in business such as Los Arcos, Mr. Pedersons' projects and building playgrounds for millionaires, such as the San Francisco Giants. All the above suggestions should be implemented year round.
- Incorporate more safety features in all new construction and eventually existing.
- Prioritize the functions of the city and fund in each of those functions. Less vital departments should receive less funding when times are difficult. Areas where cuts can be made in tough times would be cultural arts, delays in increased building or personnel and expenses in diversity activities.
- Just do the job-and don't take home the "paper clips."

- Parks department needs better enforcement, example, unauthorized usage fines, excess staff in park offices at Chaparral Park. Parks department needs program for memorial plantings that will reduce costs of operation. Higher fees for library use by non-residents and local users late fees.
- Do not subsidize private businesses!
- Stop stupid zoning that then asks for a "Preserve".
- Cultural council; Culture Quest subsidy; preservation tax; Los Arcos give away tax. City should enforce codes at center.
- We are in transition. Equestrian is a piece of nostalgia-few own horses. Let's put a corral around it, expand on image and aesthetics. Partner with ASU on Los Arcos!!
- Increase property tax, tax services by professionals e.g. wills, trust, architectural services and license fees (burglar alarm etc.) In 1999 the annual license fee for alarms was \$20.00 in 2003 it was \$5.00 in Scottsdale.
- Continue to encourage citizens to volunteer.
- Negotiate profit sharing with Phoenix re: Kierland business; auto dealers & other businesses on west side of Scottsdale Road. Partner with Native American Community (Pima) on business enterprises.
- Utilizing employees in more effective way; in sanitation workers, police, etc. helping code enforcers. No consultants!
- Spent too much on bus trolleys-too big-need more reasonable bus benches not expensive fancy ones.
- Monthly passes for pools and recreation services at a 10% discount. This works well in private sector.
- Combining department/personnel whenever necessary. Use volunteer private citizen groups to augment projects e.g. work with code enforcement to identify problem areas. Look at the lawyer fees and contracting with a former city employee. Evaluate the need to hire consultants at every whim.
- How do staff get paid for overtime-city sends too many staff to a meeting
- Human Resources - The city should explore the feasibility of using a "purchase money" retirement plan (i.e., defined contribution retirement plan) in place of the current defined benefit plan.
- Human Resources - The city should determine the amount of health care benefit subsidy paid by the city for employee dependents and consider eliminating this subsidy.
- Aviation - Landing Fees should be assessed and collected on aircraft weighing less than 12,500 lbs.
- Legal - The legal provisions in the city contracts should be changed to use Alternative Dispute Resolution instead of going to court as means to resolve a matter.
- Service (performance) measures are important for the City to track and report (measure "bang for the buck").

**General Comments**

- Thank you for this opportunity.
- The access to city officials and forums like this is a valuable asset of this city.
- Citizens don't really appreciate city staff and often are not respectful.